

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
8 July 2004 (08.07.2004)

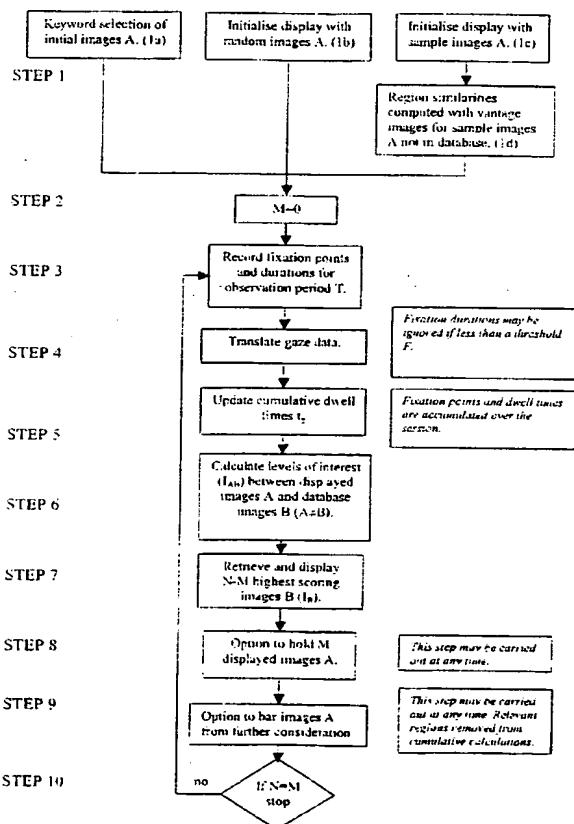
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/057493 A2

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G06F 17/30**
- (21) International Application Number: **PCT/GB2003/005096**
- (22) International Filing Date: **24 November 2003 (24.11.2003)**
- (25) Filing Language: **English**
- (26) Publication Language: **English**
- (30) Priority Data:
0229625.9 19 December 2002 (19.12.2002) GB
- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY [GB/GB]**; BT Group Legal, Intellectual Property Department, PP C5A, BT Centre, 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ (GB).
- (72) Inventor; and
- (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **STENTIFORD, Frederick, Warwick, Michael [GB/GB]**; Sheepstor, Boyton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3LH (GB).
- (74) Agent: **LLOYD, Barry, George, William**; BT Group Legal Intellectual Property Department, Holborn Centre, 8th Floor, 120 Holborn, London EC1N 2TE (GB).
- (81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AI, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW).

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SEARCHING IMAGES



(57) **Abstract:** A database of visual images includes metadata having, for a particular image, at least one entry specifying: a part of that image, another stored image, and a measure S_{abi} of the degree of similarity between that specified part and the specified other image. The searching method comprises displaying one or more images; receiving input from a user (for example by using a gaze tracker) indicative of part of the displayed images; determining measures of interest for each of a plurality of non-displayed stored images specified by the metadata for the displayed image(s), as a function of the similarity measure(s) and the relationship between the user input and the part specified; and, on the basis of these measures, selecting, from those non-displayed stored images, further images for display.